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THE STORY OF ABE.

THOSE who profess to know all about slavery will tell you that the negro was a thousand times happier, as a slave than he is as a freeman. This may be true of some of the race; we do not enter into the question. The field-hand was in general an entirely irresponsible creature. He belonged to his master as thoroughly as the dogs and horses did, and he was of infinitely less importance. He had his daily task and his daily rations; he had also, if owned by a kind master, his little amusements, chief of which were the dance and the camp-meeting. Such a life would naturally not inspire one with any very high ambition. Give the plantation negro his hoe-cake and his bit of fat pork, his banjo, and the privilege of telling his experience to an unlimited chorus of 'Halleluiahs!' and 'Bress de Lords!' and you gave him perfect bliss. If the white man was his oppressor, he seldom knew it. 'De family' were, except in rare cases, admired and revered. And these poor creatures who did not own themselves, assumed and felt an air of proud proprietorship when speaking of the glories of their master's state, and specially of each 'young mas'r' and 'lily miss.' 'Young mas'r' was at once their tyrant and their darling. I have heard a wedding ceremony wound up with, 'Hark, from de tombs a doleful sound!' with all its concomitant tears and groans, because 'Marse Harry' had so ordered.

This state of things by no means came to an end with the civil war. Long after the slaves were freemen, and the broad acres had changed owners, and 'old mas'r' had fallen in battle or died broken-hearted, all that were left of the proud old name were still 'de family' to those loving hearts. While the writer lived in one of the border towns of Virginia, the mother of one of her maids appeared one day to ask for largess. 'We'se done goin' to hab a party, Miss Anne,' said she; 'an' some ob de ladies dey gibs me flour; an' some, eggs; an' some, sugar; an' ole missis she would a' gib me a whole great big

cake, but I up an' tole her I had one.—It was a lie,' she explained earnestly, fearing I would think further gifts unnecessary; 'but some o' dem pore white trash say de missis hain't got nuff to eat.' And Chloe fairly sobbed.

I ventured to ask the occasion of the festivity.

'Well, ye see, Miss Anne,' said Chloe, brightening, 'us cullud pussons is gettin' married now just like white folks; an' as my ole mammy 'll be eighty the day after to-morrow, Marse George said I had oughter gib her an' father a weddin'.'

Better late than never, thought I, as I added something to Chloe's basket.

In addition to the plantation negroes and the often petted and spoiled household servants, there was among the coloured population of the South a certain proportion of skilled mechanics. These were not only, from their superior intelligence, more alive than the rest of their race to the hardship of slavery, but, from their greater value, more apt to suffer from it. Why, for instance, should Jim, a good blacksmith, trifle his time away on the plantation, where there was little or nothing for him to do, when Smith in the adjacent town will give Jim's master, always in need of money, handsome payment for the slave's services? The master is perhaps a kind man, and Smith known to be just the reverse, but hiring is not like selling. And so Jim goes, and toils in the sweat of his brow till Smith's payment to the master is wrung out from him a thousandfold.

It is of one of these mechanics I am going to tell you, and, excepting that the names of the persons connected with the story have been changed, every word of Abe's story is true.

In the heart of West Virginia, on the picturesque banks of the Great Kanawha River, there is a large tract of land once owned by Washington. Besides the niece who afterwards became Mrs Parke Custis, Washington had another in whom he was greatly interested, the daughter of his brother Lawrence. This lady, much against the wishes of her distinguished

uncle, became the wife of Major Parks of Baltimore; and when this gallant officer, fulfilling Washington's predictions, had spent all he could lay his hands upon and a great deal more, the couple, for his sins, were banished to what was then the wilderness of Western Virginia. Their daughter in course of time married Mr Prescott, a rich young planter from the east, whose money, laid out on the Washington acres, produced a flourishing plantation; while on one of the most romantic sites on the Kanawha arose a noble mansion known as Prescott Place. Here Mrs Prescott exercised for years a lavish hospitality; and here were preserved, until fire consumed them and the mansion together, sundry relics of Washington, chief of which was a characteristic letter to his niece, written before her marriage, warning her that as she made her bed, so she should lie upon it.

When young Laura Prescott married gay Dick Randolph, Abe, the son of Mr Prescott's body-servant, was one of numerous presents of like kind. Abe was an excellent carpenter; and when dark days came to the Prescotts and Randolphs, it was Abe himself who persuaded 'Marse Dick' to sell him to a man from the north named Hartley, who from being a slave-driver had risen to be a slave-owner, and who had the reputation of being a very demon. Again and again Hartley offered a tempting price, and again and again Dick Randolph refused it; nor would he have yielded at last, hard pressed as he was, had he not felt that Abe, being about to be hired to a builder in the neighbourhood, would be really out of Hartley's power. And when, some months after the sale, Abe walked over to Prescott Place to tell that his new master was going to allow him to purchase his freedom by working over-hours, Mr Randolph felt quite at ease about the faithful fellow. A price being set by Hartley, Abe set himself cheerfully to earn it—for years commencing his day's work with the dawn, and carrying it far into the night.

But the general opinion of Hartley had not, it was soon seen, done him injustice. Twice, thrice, was the price of Abe's freedom raised just as he seemed on the eve of gaining it; and after the third disappointment, the slave became utterly hopeless, and, abandoning all extra labour, spent his spare hours in the darkest corner of his wretched cabin, brooding over his wrongs. This was by no means what Hartley intended; so, to encourage Abe, he was led to promise, in the presence of Mr Randolph, that he would abide by the sum last named. In law, of course, the promise was good for nothing; but the *ci-devant* slave-driver was supposed to have some regard for public opinion. In vain Mr Randolph offered a higher price than was demanded for the slave himself. Abe should buy himself, Hartley said, or he should not be bought at all.

Three years had passed, when Abe, getting a half-holiday from the builder who hired him, set off for Hartley's with the stipulated sum. On his way there he stopped at Prescott Place to tell the good news. This was just at the beginning of the war; and Mr Randolph, being about to join the army, had promised to take Abe with him as his servant.

Next morning, while breakfast was being served at Prescott Place, a loud scuffle was heard

at the dining-room door, and Hartley, using his whip freely on the servant who tried to stop him, strode into the room livid with passion, and flourishing his whip in Mr Randolph's face, yelled, with an oath: 'Where is that nigger?'

Dick Randolph's blood was up in a moment, but he was first of all a gentleman. 'Do you see my wife?' he asked sternly.

A coarse response from Hartley was all the reply, and in a moment the ruffian had measured his length on the floor; nor did he remember more till he found himself struggling in a pool of not very clean water by the highway. The negroes had received orders to take him off the plantation, and the precise spot where they were to deposit him not having been mentioned, they had selected one in accordance with his deserts.

Hartley thought it prudent to disappear for a time. Whether he was simply a coward, or feared that some ugly facts connected with the case might leak out, was never known. Abe himself was not seen or heard of; and his story, except by a few, was soon, in these eventful times, forgotten.

But the facts of the case were these: on the evening referred to, Abe had found his master pleasant, and even jocular, wishing he had not given the promise, offering to buy Abe back again, and so on. At last he turned to business. The money was produced and counted.

'Well?' said Hartley, inquiringly.

Abe did not understand. Hartley seemed waiting for something. At last he spoke plainly. 'Where is the rest of the money?'

The scoundrel had made up his mind to deny having received the previous payments, to deny all knowledge even of sums he had meanly borrowed from his slave, and to hand him back to helpless, hopeless slavery.

That night Abe appeared at the cabin of his wife, a slave on a distant plantation. There he briefly told the story of his wrongs, adding: 'I am going to-night. It may be long before you see me; but if it is fifty years, I will come back for you, if you are faithful.'

Phyllis promised to be true; and kept her promise as slaves do; that is, she married—they called it marrying—the first man who asked her.

The five years of the war had come and gone, and ten years more. Major Randolph, past middle age, and utterly ruined, was trying, in a small Virginian town, to take up the profession of law, which, in happier days, he had studied, but had not cared to practise; and the widow of Hartley, who had meantime died bankrupt, was keeping a boarding-house in the same place; when, on a certain forenoon, there was shown into the Randolphs' parlour a tall, portly, middle-aged man, gentlemanly in appearance, and thoroughly well dressed, but perfectly black. The Irish maid-of-all-work had forgiven his colour for the sake of his clothes.

Mr Randolph happened to be at home, and it was to him the stranger eagerly turned. 'Marse Dick!' he cried.

'Abe!'

And Abe it was. And there were tears in at least three pairs of eyes as the master and slave of former days shook hands.

Well, Abe might have been a long-lost brother, Major Randolph was so glad to see him. He made him tell his adventures from the time he left Hartley until he appeared in the Randolphs' parlour; he showed him his sons and his daughters, and rattled on about old days. But never a word did he say about wounds and losses and disappointments; though it could hardly have escaped Abe's affectionate eyes that, while his own outer man bore such marks of prosperity, his old master's had grown actually shabby.

By ways and means generally forthcoming to border negroes who had the courage and prudence to avail themselves of them, Abe had gone northward first, returning to Virginia, however, the moment the emancipation proclamation was issued. Hearing of Major Randolph's absence and his own wife's unfaithfulness, he had wandered farther and farther from his old home, and had settled at last in a far south-western state. There he had worked steadily; at first on shares, then for himself; till at the time of his visit to Virginia, he was the manager and largest shareholder of the celebrated Hot Springs of A—.

Need I say how earnestly 'Marse Dick' was besought to try the springs for his rheumatism, to bring 'Miss Laura' and the family, to enjoy horses and carriages, to fish and hunt, and generally to enter into possession?

Old Mrs Prescott, who still lived, shared with her son and daughter the pleasure of Abe's return, and the young Randolphs listened with delight to such an interesting romance. And yet—truth compels me to confess that the eldest daughter gave more than one uneasy glance into the street, and was literally sitting on thorns. What if a morning caller should find a negro in the Randolph parlour? Even kind Mrs Randolph had a feeling of uneasiness as the early dinner-hour approached. But the master guessed at no such embarrassments. The hour came; the bell rang, and as easily and cordially Major Randolph said: 'You will come to dinner with us, Abe.'

'After you and the family, Marse Dick.'

'With me and the family,' replied Major Randolph.

And though Abe earnestly begged to be allowed to wait, into the dining-room he went. And I may add, that had the most curious or mischievous eyes been on the watch for solecisms of any kind, they would have been disappointed.

'What would you have had me do?' said Major Randolph afterwards. 'There was Abe, dying to lavish on his old master all he possessed. Was I to be outdone in hospitality by my own old slave?'

'And Abe had just as much delicacy as papa,' owned Miss Randolph, who felt she could afford to praise when the critical period was safely over—a merciful providence having kept away visitors. 'He spoke just as good English as we do. But did you notice that, though he spoke of Mr Hartley and Mr everybody else, he always called papa "Marse Dick"?''

Before Abe left town, he had put a little bit of business in Mr Randolph's hands—no other than the settlement of a mortgage that threatened to ruin Mrs Hartley and her children. 'O Marse Dick!' he said, 'I have been keeping away till I was rich enough to buy that man up; and then

I meant to meet him face to face and ask him what he thought of himself. I doubt if I could have kept my hands off him; and now he is gone. I hope the good Lord will forgive me!'

Were I writing a romance, I might tell how Abe made his old master's fortune. But I have given you a poor idea of Major Randolph if I have led you to imagine he would allow himself to profit by his old servant's prosperity in the smallest degree. If Abe told him of a good investment, he had no money. If a loan was modestly and hesitatingly offered, on the plea that Abe wished to place money at interest, and that there were so few whom he could trust, it was kindly but decidedly refused. And so Abe grows richer, and Major Randolph poorer than ever. The old-time slaves, with many misty ideas on the subject of religion, had one article of belief which they understood clearly, and for which they would have suffered martyrdom—namely, that in the next world it would be their turn to sit at table and eat the good things, while the proud white folks should 'grease de griddle and turn de cakes.' The doctrine is founded on the principle of compensation, but the compensation in some cases begins here.

ONE WOMAN'S HISTORY.

CHAPTER XVI.

'I HAVE something of serious import to say to you,' were Mora's first words as he went forward a few steps and then halted. 'Hector Laroche, do you know that you are in imminent danger of your life?'

He gave a little start and looked at her fixedly for a moment or two. 'No; I am not aware of anything of the kind,' he answered with a sneer. 'Madame, you are oracular!'

'Oh, hush! This is no time for levity. Will you not believe me when I tell you that your life is in danger? The assassins have tracked you—they have followed you here—they have sworn to take your life!'

'The assassins! What assassins?' he shrieked as he bounded to his feet.

'Can you not guess? Think, Laroche, think! Oh, how like you it was to turn traitor to the cause to which you had bound yourself by oath, and to betray your comrades! But your treachery has been discovered. The penalty you cannot be ignorant of.'

He had turned livid with terror while Mora was speaking. A glassy film had overspread his eyes, which looked dilated to twice their ordinary size. His gaze wandered from corner to corner of the room with a sort of stealthy fright, as if dreading that an assassin might spring upon him at any moment. A cold perspiration bathed him from head to foot; he trembled in every limb, and would have fallen had he not supported himself with his back and hands against the bureau.

'How am I to know that what you have just told me has any truth in it?' he asked at length, with a strange hoarseness in his voice. 'What should you, Mora De Vigne, know of secret

societies, plots, and conspiracies? Who should speak to you of these things, the secrets of which are known to the initiated alone? No; it is a lie—a lie! Some wretched fool has imposed upon you, or else you have concocted this story yourself in order to frighten me away.'

Looking straight at him, Mora said slowly: '*The right hand of the Czar is frozen.*'

A low cry burst from the wretched man's lips; he buried his face in his hands and fell on his knees; he knew that his doom was sealed.

A pang of compassion shot through Mora's heart. She made a step or two forward and then drew back with a shudder. All her womanly instincts revolted against the man. Not even at that supreme moment could she bring herself to go near him. 'You must go away at once—to-night,' she said. 'To-morrow may be too late.' She found herself repeating the very words of Jules.

'Go away—where?' he asked with a groan, turning his haggard face full upon her. 'All places are alike. There is no escape—none!' He rose to his feet and staggered across the room to the ottoman, on which he sank, and buried his face in the cushions.

'Will you allow me to send for Colonel Woodruffe? He will be able to counsel you far better than I as to what had best be done for your safety.'

As Laroche neither assented nor dissented, Nanette was at once despatched in quest of the colonel, who was still with Sir William. He followed close on Nanette's heels. A few words aside from Mora put him in possession of the facts of the case.

'Laroche, this is a bad business—a very bad business,' he said as he crossed to the ottoman and laid a hand on the Frenchman's shoulder. 'But sit up, and let us look the situation in the face. Whining is of no use—never is. We have to act. While there's life there's hope, and I for one don't despair of dragging you out of this dilemma, however awkward it may look just now.'

'No, monsieur; there is no hope—none,' cried Laroche. 'They have tracked me here—they will track me everywhere, till one day their opportunity will arrive. I know—I know!' His nervous agitation was still so extreme that the words seemed as if they could scarcely form themselves on his lips.

'Here—drink this,' said the colonel, handing him a glass containing brandy, which Mora had brought at his request.

Laroche swallowed the spirit greedily. It helped to steady his nerves for the time being, if it did him no other good.

'What Madame De Vigne says is quite true,' resumed the colonel. 'You must get away from this place without an hour's delay. I have thought of a plan which will at least insure your safety for a little while to come; after that, you will have to shift for yourself. I knew this part of the country well when a boy. There is a farmhouse kept by an old acquaintance of mine in a lonely valley about two miles from the

opposite shore of the lake. I will take you there to-night, and you can stay there till you have decided what your future plans shall be.'

'O monsieur, you are too good! I have not deserved this,' cried the abject wretch.

'You speak the truth, Laroche; you have not deserved it,' answered the other gravely. 'How soon can you be ready to start?'

'In ten minutes, monsieur.'

'Good.'

'But I shall need money, monsieur.'

'It shall be found you. Have you any idea as to what your plans will be after you leave the farmhouse?'

'I shall endeavour to make my way to London—it is the best hiding-place in the world for those who know it. There I shall lie quiet for a little while. After that'—He ended with an expressive lifting of his shoulders.

'If you will get ready, then,' said the colonel. 'I too have a few arrangements to make.'

Laroche nodded; then he went to the door, opened it, and gazed furtively up and down the corridor. Not a creature was in sight. He darted away and sped up the thickly carpeted staircase as noiselessly as a shadow.

The colonel sent Nanette in search of Archie Ridsdale. He came at once, and as soon as the situation of affairs had been partially explained to him, he was despatched with a message to the boathouse. Then the colonel in his turn left the room. He was only absent three or four minutes, and when he came back he was carrying a small roll of notes in his hand.

Mora had subsided into an easy-chair from the moment Colonel Woodruffe had taken charge of the situation, and there she was still sitting. Who could have analysed her thoughts during the last painful quarter of an hour, or have adequately described the varied phases of emotion which ebbed and flowed through her heart!

Immediately following on the return of the colonel, came Archie Ridsdale. Each of them was muffled in his ulster, for although the storm had not yet broken over the valley, it might do so at any moment.

A minute later the door opened and Laroche stole in. For a moment or two none of them recognised him. His black beard and moustache had vanished; a grizzled wig with long lanky tufts of hair, which fell on his coat-collar behind, covered his head; his eyebrows had been manipulated to match the wig; while a pair of heavy horn-rimmed spectacles served to disguise him still further. There was no longer the slightest trace of a Parisian dandy in his appearance; his clothes were homely, and of the fashion of some years previously. He looked like a small provincial shopkeeper who might have come over to England for a holiday. But no disguise could hide the pallor of his face, the nervous twitching of his thin lips, or the abject terror that lurked in his eyes.

Archie and the colonel stood up. The moment of departure had come. Laroche turned to his wife, who had also risen. Placing both his hands over his heart and bending low in front of her, he said in a husky whisper: 'Mora, pardon, pardon! We shall never meet again.'

For a moment or two she hesitated; all the woman within her was profoundly moved; then

she went up to him. 'Hector, with my whole heart I forgive you!' she said.

That was their farewell. A moment later Mora heard the door close behind the three men.

She turned down the lamp and drew back one of the curtains. It was pitch-dark outside; not a star was visible. She opened the window a little way, in order that she might watch as well as listen. Presently she heard a faint noise of footsteps on the gravel below. The three men had left the hotel by way of the French-window in the sitting-room on the ground floor.

Mora stood with straining eyes and ears. Suddenly the darkness was shivered by a quivering flash of lightning, and in that instant she saw the figures of the three men crossing the slope of the hill on their way to the lake. At the same time, she imagined she saw the stealthy form of Santelle disappear behind a clump of laurel, as if he were watching the retreating figures.—Will he have known Laroche in spite of his disguise?

The thought sent a cold tremor through her heart—half of horror, half of regret. But darkness had come again in the twinkling of an eye, and she saw nothing more. With a heavy sigh, she let the curtain drop into its place just as the door opened and Clarice entered the room.

CHAPTER XVII.—CONCLUSION.

Three weeks had passed since the flight of Hector Laroche, when one wet forenoon Colonel Woodruffe, in company with a constable in plain clothes, found himself at the door of a low lodging-house in a frowzy-looking street in close proximity to one of the docks. The landlord of the house admitted the visitors, and ushering them up-stairs, unlocked the door of a small bedroom. There, on a ragged straw mattress, lay the dead body of Hector Laroche. A paragraph in the morning's paper had aroused the suspicions of Colonel Woodruffe, who happened to be in London at the time, and he at once ordered a cab and set his face eastward.

The statement of the landlord of the lodging-house was to the effect that Laroche had lodged with him for little more than a week at the time of his death; that he was exceedingly quiet and well behaved; that he lay in bed nearly the whole day, reading the newspapers and French novels, and having a bottle of brandy at his elbow; and that he rarely went out of doors till after nightfall, and then only for a short time. On the Tuesday, contrary to his custom, he had gone out about noon, and on returning a little before dusk, had remarked to the landlord that he should only require his bed for one night more, as he had just secured a berth on board a steamer which was to sail the following day. At that time, he appeared to be somewhat the worse for drink. He went up-stairs soon afterwards, and nothing more was seen or heard of him. As he was in the habit of not rising till late, no comment was made on his non-appearance next morning; and it was not till two o'clock in the afternoon that the landlord knocked at his door. There being no reply to his summons, he opened the door and went in. There he found Laroche, lying on his bed as if asleep, and dressed, except for his coat and waistcoat. But over his

face was spread a fine cambric handkerchief, which medical evidence afterwards proved to have been saturated with chloroform. On the table by his side were a novel, a half-emptied bottle of cognac, a phial, uncorked, containing chloroform, and the dead man's watch and chain. In one of his pockets was found a purse containing a considerable sum in notes and gold.

At the inquest, the tendency of the evidence pointed strongly to the probability of the deceased having committed suicide while under the temporary influence of strong drink. There was only one piece of evidence forthcoming which served in some measure to invalidate that assumption. The landlord of the house deposed to the fact of the lock of the bedroom door having been secretly tampered with, so that while the door was to all appearance fastened on the inside, it could be opened without difficulty from without. As, however, there was no evidence forthcoming to implicate any one in particular with the act in question, and as the property of the dead man had apparently not been touched, the jury had no option but to bring in an open verdict. The evidence tendered by Colonel Woodruffe was confined entirely to the question of identity.

Two days later he attended Laroche's funeral—the solitary 'mourner' there. This he did out of respect for Mora.

Whether Laroche's death was the result of his own rash act, or whether it was due to certain other agencies of which mention has previously been made, is one of those mysteries respecting which the world will probably never be any wiser than it is now.

Lady Renshaw was as good as her word when she stated that she had discarded her niece for ever. But it is possible that she might not have proved quite so obdurate had she not at the same time found herself so thoroughly checkmated in other directions. Her surprise at finding Mr Etheridge transformed into Sir William Ridsdale, and the knowledge that all her scheming to secure the rich baronet's son for Miss Wynter had not only proved futile, but had evidently been seen through from the first by the keen-eyed Sir William, combined with her chagrin that Madame De Vigne, instead of being regarded in the light of an adventuress, was looked upon as a person whose friendship any one might feel proud to claim, following so close upon Bella's 'heartless duplicity,' proved more than she had the courage to face. And when, in addition, a horrid suspicion began to shape itself in her mind that Dr M'Murdo—no doubt instigated thereto by that odious Miss Gaisford—instead of having fallen in love with her, as she so fondly dreamed, had been merely trying to make her look ridiculous, and amuse himself at the same time—it was no wonder she made up her mind that the sooner she left the *Palatine* and its inmates behind her the better.

Thus it fell out next morning that when Bella, intent on forgiveness and reconciliation, knocked at her aunt's door, there came no response; after which a very brief inquiry sufficed to establish the fact that Lady Renshaw had risen at some abnormally early hour, and, accompanied by her maid, had started southward by the first train.

She had left behind her no word or message of any kind for the dismayed girl, who found herself thus cruelly deserted in the huge hotel.

But Miss Pen came to the rescue almost before Bella in her bewilderment had time fully to realise the fact of her aunt's desertion. The little circle of which Miss Pen formed a component part welcomed her as one of themselves, now that the incubus of Lady Renshaw's presence was removed; and Bella quickly found that what she had lost in one direction was far more than made up to her in others. When, two days later, the party at the *Palatine* broke up, Miss Wynter accompanied the Rev. Septimus and his sister to their home in the Midlands, there to remain till Mr Dulcimer was prepared to claim her as his wife. And there, some three months later, a quiet wedding took place, our good vicar tying the knot, Sir William himself giving away the bride, who had not failed to become a great favourite with him, Archie acting as best-man, and Miss Loraine as bridesmaid-in-chief. Miss Pen played a voluntary on the organ, and there was a mist of tears in her eyes as she did so. Some vague dream of the past, never to be realised in this world, may perchance have been busy in her mind at the time.

When spring came round again, the worthy vicar was called upon to tie two more nuptial knots. Mora and her sister were married on the same day. Archie and his wife went abroad for a year's travel; and now that they are back, Clarice, who has far greater faith in her husband's abilities than he has himself, has made up her mind that Archie must go into parliament. She firmly believes that if he will only do so, there is a brilliant future before him. Time will prove.

Sir William has ventured to spend the last two winters in England, and, somewhat to his surprise, has found himself none the worse in health for doing so. He divides his time pretty equally between his son's house and that of Colonel Woodruffe. He did not forget our friend Mr Dulcimer when an opportunity presented itself. Through his influence, Dick was appointed to the secretaryship of a large public Company, the salary of which just doubled his previous income. Meanwhile, his wife had not found existence even in a small suburban villa by any means so unendurable as she at one time professed to fear it would be. In truth, her high spirits and good temper are enough to brighten any home. She has all the appearance of being one of the happiest women in England.

Lastly, what is there left to record of her who has been the central figure of our little history? Happily, not much. Are not the happiest lives those of which there is nothing to relate? With Mora the days of storm and stress are over; the past with all its wretchedness and misery seems little more than a hideous dream. She is happy in the present, and, so far as human fallibility can judge, there seems every prospect of her continuing so in time to come. Dr Mac came all the way from Aberdeen to attend her marriage. As he shook hands with her after the ceremony, he said: 'What a pity, my dear madame, what a great pity it is that Providence did not bless you with a twin-sister!'

'Why so, doctor?'

'Because, in that case, there is just a possibility that another poor mortal in addition to my friend the colonel might have been made a happy man to-day.'

Note.—All dramatic rights in the foregoing story are reserved by the author.

STUDIES IN ANIMAL LIFE.

HONESTY.

It is to be hoped that the animal scale of morality is not so low that when a brute acts honestly it does so only because honesty is the best policy. There are many instances known of animals acting honestly, when the slightest promptings of instinct would have shown that it was more politic to act otherwise. Self-denial and self-sacrifice have been frequently needed of animals, and in the hour of temptation they have not succumbed. Neither fear, nor pain, nor the cravings of hunger have sufficed to deter many noble members of the brute world from their sense of duty. Quite recently the Canadian papers reported an anecdote of canine fidelity which, had it been told of a Roman soldier or a Hindu nurse, would have been bruited throughout the civilised world as an instance of humanity's supremest devotion to duty. The story as told to us is, that when nearing Montreal, the engine-driver of a train saw a great dog standing on the track and barking furiously. The driver blew his whistle; yet the hound did not budge, but crouching low, was struck by the locomotive and killed. Some pieces of white muslin on the engine attracted the driver's notice; he stopped the train and went back. Beside the dead dog was a dead child which, it is supposed, had wandered on to the track and had gone to sleep. The poor watchful guardian had given its signal for the train to stop; but unheeded, had died at its post, a victim to duty.

This is no solitary specimen of canine integrity. The author of *Salad for the Social* tells of a dog whose master deposited a bag in one of the narrow streets of Southampton, and left his dog to guard it, with strict injunctions not to leave it. The faithful creature was so staunch in the fulfilment of duty, that rather than forsake its trust, it actually allowed a heavy cart to drive over it and crush it to death.

It is not merely momentary impulse, nor ignorance of the effects of this steadfastness—as some may imagine—that prompts animals to act thus faithfully; there are numerous cases on record to prove that they will sustain hunger, endure pain and fatigue, and withstand temptation, at the dictates of duty, as gallantly as any human being. Youatt is the authority for the following remarkable instance of canine integrity. An officer returning from a day's shooting deposited his spoil in a certain room, in the custody of his dogs. Mechanically he locked the door, put the key in his pocket, and departed. Soon afterwards, he was called away upon urgent business, and during his absence of several days, forgot all about his game and the dogs. When he returned home, he hastened to the

room, and there found both dogs dead of hunger. Not only had they refrained from touching the game, but they had also kept quiet, having neither barked nor cried, evidently fearing to betray the trust they deemed their master had confided to them.

It is related by Professor Bell that when a friend of his was travelling abroad, he one morning took out his purse to see if it contained sufficient change for a day's jaunt he proposed making. He departed from his lodgings, leaving a trusted dog behind. When he dined, he took out his purse to pay, and found that he had lost a gold coin from it. On returning home in the evening, his servant informed him that the dog seemed to be very ill, as they could not induce it to eat anything. He went at once to look at his favourite; and as soon as he entered the room, the faithful creature ran to him, deposited the missing gold coin at his feet, and then devoured the food placed for it with great eagerness. The truth was that this gentleman had dropped the coin in the morning; the dog had picked it up, and kept it in its mouth, fearing even to eat, lest it should lose its master's property before an opportunity offered to restore it.

Professor Bell also tells of a Newfoundland dog kept at an inn in Dorset, which was accustomed, every morning as the clock struck eight, to take in its mouth a basket placed for the purpose and containing some pence, and go with it to the baker's. The man took out the money, replacing it by a certain number of rolls, which Neptune returned home with. He never touched the eatables; but on one occasion when another dog attempted to despoil the basket, master Nep put down his burden and gave the intruder a thrashing; that accomplished, he regained his charge, and carried it home in triumph.

In his interesting *African Travels*, Le Vaillant details how he missed his favourite setter. After a fruitless search, and the repeated firing of his gun to guide the animal, he sent an attendant back by the way they had travelled to try and discover the lost favourite. About two leagues back on the route the dog was found keeping guard over a chair and basket which had been dropped unperceived from the wagon. But for this fortunate discovery of the honest dog, it must speedily have perished by hunger or from the beasts of prey.

In Taylor's *General Character of the Dog* is given an account of one of these faithful animals which daily carried to a labourer in Portsmouth dockyard his dinner. Trusty, as the dog was rightly named, had to take the basket containing his master's mid-day meal upwards of a mile, so that he had frequently to rest on the journey. He was very careful as to where he deposited his load, and would not allow any one to come near it. When he reached the dock-gates, he often had to wait until they were opened for the admission or egress of any one; but the instant he could effect an entrance, he ran in with his charge and carried it to his master, who, after he had partaken of his dinner, re-delivered the empty basket to his faithful servitor to carry home again.

In his *Essay on Instinct*, Hancock tells of a dog belonging to a Glasgow taproom keeper that was accustomed to carry its master's breakfast to him

in a tin can between its teeth. When the family removed, the dog changed his route, and never went wrong. It could not be induced to accept a favour when on its master's errands, and carefully avoided any of its own species. This incorruptible servant, which by the way understood Gaelic as well as English, often carried home meat to the weight of half a stone, but never attempted to touch it. Dogs, indeed, rarely attempt to touch food belonging to their owners. One very remarkable instance is recorded by Jesse of a dog that accompanied its mistress when returning from market with a basket of provisions. They were overwhelmed by a snowstorm, and not discovered for three days; the woman was found to be dead; but the dog, which was lying by her side, was alive. The honest creature, however, had not touched the eatables in his mistress's basket, but, as neighbouring villagers remembered when too late, had been endeavouring, on the evening of the storm, by whinings and sighs they could not comprehend, to induce them to follow it to where its mistress was.

In his *Anecdotes of Dogs*, Captain Brown speaks of a mastiff that was locked up by mistake an entire day in a pantry where milk, butter, and meat were within reach. The hungry dog did not touch any of these things, although it ate voraciously as soon as food was given to it.

Colonel Hamilton Smith is our authority for the anecdote of a dog that followed its owner, who was on horseback, and who contrived to drop some cakes from his basket as he cantered home. On his arrival, he found that his trusty follower had gathered up some of the lost cakes and carried them home and had gone for the remainder, which it duly returned with untasted.

'Dogs,' says Colonel Smith, 'have an instinctive comprehension of the nature of property;' and it is really most remarkable, considering that they have not human speech, how frequently, and how well, they make us understand their views on this point. The colonel alludes to the case of a lady at Bath who was somewhat alarmed by the behaviour of a strange mastiff that seemed anxious to prevent her going on. Finding she had lost her veil, she turned back, the dog going before her until she came to the missing article and picked it up. As soon as the dog saw she had regained her property, it scampered off to its master.

Anecdotes of this character are innumerable, as are also those of dogs reclaiming property belonging, or which has belonged, to their owners. Sir Patrick Walker furnishes a most valuable instance of this propensity in our canine cousins. A farmer having sold a flock of sheep to a dealer, lent him his dog to drive them home, a distance of thirty miles, desiring him to give the dog a meal at the journey's end and tell it to go home. The drover found the dog so useful, that he resolved to steal it, and instead of sending it back, locked it up. The collie grew sulky, and at last effected its escape. Evidently deeming the drover had no more right to detain the sheep than he had to detain itself, the honest creature went into the field, collected all the sheep that had belonged to its master, and, to that person's intense astonishment, drove the whole flock home again!

Dogs are not only honest in themselves, but will not permit others to be dishonest. The late Grantley Berkeley was wont to tell of his two deerhounds 'Smoker' and Smoker's son 'Shark,' a curiously suggestive instance of parental discipline. The two dogs were left alone in a room where luncheon was laid out. Smoker's integrity was invincible; but his son had not yet learned to resist temptation. Through the window, Mr Berkeley noticed Shark, anxiously watched by its father, steal a cold tongue and drag it to the floor. 'No sooner had he done so,' says his master, 'than the offended sire rushed upon him, rolled over him, beat him, and took away the tongue;' after which Smoker retired gravely to the fireside.

Mr Blaine, among many similar records, tells of a spaniel he had which protected the dinner-table, during its master's absence, from the attempts of a cat which sought to make too intimate an acquaintance with the leg of mutton. Both the animals belonged to Mr Blaine, and were on friendly terms with each other; but one was honest, and the other was not.

Hitherto, specimens of canine integrity have alone been cited; but it must not be supposed that dogs are the only animals which exhibit honest traits. Captain Gordon Stables, in his book on *Cats*, proves by several tales of real life that pussy is often as trustworthy as any dog. His own cat 'Muffie' is allowed her place on the table at meals, and never attempts to touch the viands, even when left alone, nor, what is more suggestive, never allows any one else to touch them. The present writer's family had a white cat which for nearly twenty years was trusted with anything, until one luckless day, in its old age, its appetite overcame its reason; it broke the eighth commandment, and stole a piece of steak. The distress and shamefacedness of the poor animal after the crime were quite pathetic; she hid herself in dark corners; turned her back on observers, and for several days was so ashamed of herself, that she could not look any one in the face, although, poor old favourite, not a person reproached her for her first known offence against the laws of property.

BOOK GOSSIP.

MORE than two years ago we had the pleasure of noticing, with favourable comment, a new book, *Bits from Blinkbonny*, by 'John Strathesk.' It was a clever and entertaining book, presenting successive pictures of Scottish village life drawn with so much truth and character as at once to stamp them genuine portraiture.

The author, encouraged no doubt by the well-merited success of the above volume, has issued a second, entitled *More Bits from Blinkbonny* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson, and Ferrier). 'Continuations' are proverbially risky, and we fear we cannot congratulate the author on having escaped the risk unscathed. The title will perhaps help the book temporarily—from a publisher's point of view; but it would have fared better in the long-run had it been issued as an independent work on village life in Scotland, leaving the former volume to stand by itself. As it is, however, it is only when compared with its predecessor that this volume may be said to

indicate any falling-off on the part of the author. It is full of bright and truthful sketches of the habits of life and modes of thought prevalent in the Scottish Lowlands, and can scarcely fail to be read with interest by those to whom such sketches appeal. Here is a story told by a barber regarding one of his customers. The customer referred to was a man who got his hair cut only twice a year, and when he came for this purpose it was always completely matted. The barber recommended him to 'redd' (that is, comb) his hair every day. 'No very likely,' was the reply; 'it's only redd every six months, and then it's like to rive a' the hair out o' my head; if I was reddin' every day, I wadna hae a hair left at the month's end.'

The volume, we may add, is tastefully printed and bound, while the pictorial illustrations give force to its local characterisations.

In *Photography for Amateurs* (London: Cassell & Co.), Mr T. C. Hepworth, lecturer to the late Polytechnic Institution, gives excellent hints and instructions for beginners in this art. For those who have taken up photography as a pleasant occupation of their leisure hours, this book can be especially recommended. Most travellers in Central Africa, or in any little known part of our world, now find the photographic camera a necessary adjunct of their equipment, as, by its aid, rapid and correct pictures can be made of striking and picturesque scenes. This is equally true of a pedestrian at home, and Mr Hepworth looks back with delight to a walking tour in the Highlands, when he found so many lovely little nooks in the Trossachs and elsewhere admirably suited to his art. The effective delineation of objects by photography demands both care and experience; but there are now many amateurs of both sexes who can turn out very satisfactory pictures. Landscape photography is one thing, and portraiture is another and more difficult undertaking, for the inexperienced; but with the help of such a manual as this, which describes the necessary apparatus, negative-printing, fixing and washing the prints, &c., the way must be greatly smoothed for beginners in the art. The Introduction presents a concise history of the art up to the time when the use of gelatine dry plates made the practice of photography more convenient and possible for amateurs.

Lately we noticed in these pages the publication of a volume of music entitled *The Athole Collection of Dance Music of Scotland*, edited by Mr James Stewart Robertson (Edradynate). To this we have now to add by the same publishers, *The Killin Collection of Gaelic Songs*, with music and translations, by Mr Charles Stewart (Edinburgh, MacLachlan and Stewart). In selecting and arranging the melodies in this collection, the editor has borne in mind (1) Those that have already established themselves as favourites; (2) Those that have not been published until now, but which, in his opinion, are deserving of publication; (3) Some ancient chants to which the Fingalic poetry was sung; and (4) A few hymn tunes—one of them old, and the others on the lines of old Gaelic melody, in the hope of showing how admirably that melody is fitted for sacred

song. Mr Stewart has been assisted by Mr Merryleas in arranging the harmonies and accompaniments; and in the supplying of English words for the Gaelic originals he has had the efficient help of such well-known pens as those of Principal Shairp, Professor Blackie, Dr Norman Macleod, and others. This collection of Gaelic music ought to have a hearty reception, not only from those who are familiar with Celtic surroundings, but also from students of music generally, as an important contribution to the history and archaeology of the art.

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The International Forestry Exhibition of 1884 gave a new impetus to the study of forestry. The importance of that science is now coming to be generally recognised, and private individuals, as well as those mysterious beings 'the authorities,' are bestowing some attention upon the practical application of its principles. Dr J. C. Brown has, more than any other living writer, identified himself with this important subject, and it is worthy of notice that all the works which have been produced by his prolific pen during the last few years are remarkable for their wide learning, profound and practical acquaintance with the science as practised all over the world, and happy style of expression. His *Introduction to the Study of Modern Forest Economy* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd) is no exception to this rule. Within very moderate limits, he has contrived to convey much information relative to the present state of forest-science.

The facts relating to the time when the greater part of Europe was covered with forests are of great interest, and also the account here given of the consequences of their disappearance. And it may be observed that in addition to such generally admitted evils as the scarcity of timber and droughts—as to the latter of which Dr Brown gives us many graphic illustrations, collected during his residence at the Cape of Good Hope—it is alleged that many of those devastating inundations which occur with such alarming frequency in some countries are due to this cause. It is certainly worthy of notice that floods seldom originate in densely wooded lands, and have been largely prevented in France by artificial *reboisement*; while in Northern Germany, the same process has been very successfully followed in fixing down and utilising drift-sand.

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To judge by the examples of stuffed pets which are to be seen in many private houses, there certainly seems to be room for a handbook on the art of stuffing fish, flesh, and fowl. This has at any rate been supplied in *Practical Taxidermy*, by Montague Brown, F.Z.S. (London: L. Upcott Gill). As a 'manual of instruction to the amateur in collecting, preserving, and setting up natural history specimens of all kinds,' the volume leaves little to be desired. Not only has Mr Brown betrayed many of the secrets with which professional taxidermists have sought to surround their art, but he has particularised with minuteness and patience the whole *technique* of skinning and preserving birds, mammals, fishes, and reptiles. Moreover, his book justifies its title, for it is above all things practical. Besides being a

guide to the taxidermist's art, the book gives a chapter on 'dressing and softening skins and furs as leather.'

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The study of the diseases of plants offers a very wide field to the inquirer, and it is only of recent years that investigations in this direction have come to be regarded as of economic importance. In spite of the strong prejudices of agriculturists of the old school, it is believed that vegetable pathology will prove to be of the greatest practical value, and that the time is approaching when the best means of preventing the attacks of disease will be a recognised branch of practical agriculture. This eventuality is certainly indicated by the appearance of *Diseases of Field and Garden Crops, chiefly such as are caused by Fungi*, by Worthington G. Smith (London: Macmillan & Co.). Originally delivered as addresses at the request of the officers of the Institute of Agriculture at the British Museum, South Kensington, these notes are very full and elaborate, while the admirable illustrations with which they are accompanied give them an additional value. Although necessarily technical, the definition of all the phenomena of the diseases has been given in familiar words, and all botanical terms have been explained. To illustrate the thoroughness with which the work has been done, having regard to the limits of the volume, we find under 'Potatoes' the new disease (*Peziza postuma*) which has made its appearance within the last few years, the dreaded disease produced by the parasitic fungus of the murrain, the smut, scab, and the old potato disease in its active and passive state. Then mildew and blight are treated of as affecting respectively onions, straw, turnips, cabbages, grass, corn, borage, barberries, parsnips, peas, and lettuces. There are also valuable notes upon the new diseases which are making such havoc with grass, wheat, barley, ryegrass, and onions; and their fungoid character is conclusively established. The book, like those on cognate subjects by Miss Ormerod, which have been already noticed in these pages, will amply repay careful study.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE SOCIETY OF ARTS, London, has just commenced the one hundred and thirty-first session of its useful career. Professor Abel, the chairman of its Council, presided at the opening meeting, and his speech was a resumé of the progress of scientific research in various directions, in which a large number of persons are just now much interested. Being an electrician, he naturally devoted some time to the progress of electrical illumination, and pointed to the wonderful display at the recent International Health Exhibition as an illustration of the grand results now possible. He also expressed himself satisfied with the recent advances made in the direction of electric railways and other means of locomotion to which the comparatively new power has been experimentally applied, not omitting a very favourable reference to the telpherage system of Professor Fleeming Jenkin.

The present position of the science of aerial navigation does not commend itself to Professor Abel as holding out much hope of future success. The recent experiments in France, during which an electrically propelled balloon was made to take more than one short excursion in a predetermined direction, merely prove that electricity can, under exceptionally favourable circumstances, be employed in this new service. But much has been done in making balloons serviceable for purposes of reconnaissance in warfare, the various details, such as making and transporting hydrogen gas in a compressed state to the field of action, having been successfully provided for.

Attention was also called in Professor Abel's address to compressed carbonic acid gas as a convenient source of power. Messrs Krupp, the great cannon-founders, at their extensive works at Essen are using this power for maintaining steel castings under pressure during the solidification of the metal. The earthen mould is closed directly it is filled with metal, after which the compressed gas is admitted to it from a reservoir of liquid carbonic acid, and in this way the space above the molten metal is filled with gas under very high pressure. A tendency to the formation of flaws and cavities, which nearly all metals are subject to—meaning, in the case of railway plant, broken bridges and fractured crank axles—is in this way completely avoided. It is believed that the employment of this gas under pressure—compressed, that is, to the liquid state and stored in iron bottles—has a very wide future before it in many other useful applications.

Lastly, the important question of a pure water-supply engaged the professor's attention, and his opinion on this point will be best given in his own words. 'I venture,' he says, 'to think that our hope for a radical improvement in the water-supply of this great metropolis lies rather in the application of a simple, expeditious, cheap, and effective mode of chemical treatment to supplies from sources now in use, previous to their filtration, than in a complete change of our source of supply.' It now, therefore, remains for future experimenters to devise some means by which water can be freed from those germs which, under various names, are now said to be responsible for the ills of mankind, and at the same time be left uncontaminated by any foreign matter. The problem seems to be a hard one to solve, but not harder than many which have been successfully conquered by modern science.

Whilst our never-ending difficulties in the Soudan and South Africa are giving us costly information regarding those parts of the huge continent, Mr Joseph Thomson comes back from his hazardous journey in Eastern Africa to tell us about a tract of country with regard to which hardly anything before was known. If we refer to a map of Africa, we shall be readily able to note the position of Lake Victoria Nyanza, with which Mr H. M. Stanley's name is identified. Between this lake and the coast lies the theatre

of Mr Thomson's wanderings. With an inadequate number of followers, the great majority of whom he describes as the very offscourings of Zanzibar villainy, this intrepid explorer prosecuted his work in the face of almost inconceivable perils. His contributions to geographical knowledge are of great importance, and his sole reward is the hearty reception accorded to him the other evening, when he gave a graphic account of his adventures to the Royal Geographical Society.

At the recent Exhibition at Philadelphia, attention was directed in a rather comical but effective manner to the Edison electric lamp. A powerful lamp of this description was fastened to the head of a black man, concealed wires being carried down his body from it and connected with copper discs on the heels of his boots. This coloured gentleman—the term 'darkie' is here obviously inadmissible—could become luminous at will by simply placing his heels upon certain copper conductors laid along the floor, which were in circuit with the general system for lighting the building.

A still more startling novelty in electric illumination was organised in New York a few weeks ago, an illustration of which is given in the *Scientific American*, published in that city. This consisted of an electric torchlight procession, which traversed several of the streets; and its object was, we presume, to advertise the Edison system of electric illumination. The procession may be best described as a hollow square formed by about three hundred men, each wearing a helmet, surmounted by a powerful electric lamp, and each holding the protected rope which carried the current from one to the other. In the centre of the square travelled a steam-engine and dynamo-machine—on trucks drawn by horses—followed by coal and water carts to supply the engine with its necessary food. Both horses and trucks were decorated with lamps, and the leader of the brilliant throng carried a staff tipped with radiance of two hundred candle-power.

Our readers will learn with interest that Mr Clement Wragge, the pioneer of the meteorological station on the summit of Ben Nevis, is initiating a work of similar character in Australia. He has placed self-registering instruments on the top of Mount Lofty in connection with the Observatory at Sydney, and has appealed to the public to help in promoting scientific research by leaving them untouched.

An explosion last July at a gunpowder factory in Lancashire, by which four men lost their lives, was caused by lightning. This disaster once more calls attention to the grave necessity which exists for buildings, and such buildings especially, to be protected by efficient lightning-conductors. From Colonel Ford's Report upon the matter, which as Inspector of Explosives he has just presented to the Secretary of State, it appears that a conductor was fitted to the doomed building, but that it was a defective one. He states that there is no authentic case on record where a properly constructed lightning-conductor failed to do its duty; and recommends that these safeguards should be periodically examined and tested.

From time to time, we have given in these pages the results of different experiments with

the new method of preserving fodder, known as ensilage, and have expressed the hope that our farmers may find in it some compensation for recent bad times. We now learn from the agricultural returns for 1884 how widespread have been the experiments in this direction. These returns state that no fewer than six hundred and ten silos have been built in this country, of which five hundred and fourteen are to be found in England, sixty in Scotland, and thirty-six in Wales. Of the English counties, Norfolk heads the list with fifty-nine silos. In Scotland, Argyll has twelve, and is followed by Lanark and Renfrew, which counties have each half that number. The largest silo noted in the returns is in the county of Argyll. We may gather from these figures that the principle of ensilage as adapted to British farming has now entirely passed the experimental stage. (This important subject is further noticed in one of our Occasional Notes. See p. 829.)

The novel proposal has lately been made by Mr W. O. Chambers, the Secretary of the National Fish-culture Association, that fishponds should be established on lands which are unavailable for ordinary crops, and that unprofitable agri-culture should give place to profitable aqua-culture. The fish which it is said can be made to accomplish this desirable result is the carp, and the German carp in particular. According to Mr Chambers, this fish attains in three years a weight of four pounds, and its fecundity is so great that it will yield an average of half a million eggs. He states that one acre of water will produce, with little or no expense for food or maintenance, five thousand fish per annum. In a word, we are recommended to do as did the monks of old when monastic buildings were dotted over the land. The remains of fish stews or ponds left to us by the monks can be pointed to in plenty, and the question arises, if fresh-water fish-culture is really so profitable, why were these ponds suffered to fall into disuse? Another consideration arises as to whether, supposing the scheme to be possible, modern taste, not compelled to eat fish on certain days, would find the fresh-water variety palatable?

The British Rainfall Association is one of those unobtrusive societies which is doing quietly a work of great good. Begun some years back by Mr Symons, who set up a rain-gauge in his garden in London, and put himself in communication with a few friends in other parts of the country who did the same, the Association now numbers two thousand observers, spread over the United Kingdom. Mr Symons has lately published a curious diagram showing approximately the amount of rain which has fallen each year in Britain for two centuries. Of course such a record cannot pretend to be infallible, especially in the case of the earlier period which it covers, but it opens out more than one extremely interesting subject for inquiry.

The year 1884, with its genial spring, its splendid summer, and its gorgeous autumn, has been one in which the rainfall has been somewhat below the average; and in some districts there have been positive symptoms of a water-famine. But if we look back to the last century, we find a period of drought between the years 1738 and 1750, which, if it recurred in the present

day would, in Mr Symons's opinion, dry up the water-supply of nearly every town in the kingdom. Another curious observation is this: an unusually wet year seems to occur at intervals of ten years, the years ending with the figure four being the favoured ones. Thus, 1854, '64, '74, and so on, were wet years. But at the same time another twelve-year cycle of dry years also occurs—the years 1824, '36, '48, and so on, having been particularly limited in their rainfall. In this year of grace 1884, the two cycles terminate together, as they must do every now and then. So we have a year of doubt, and know not until its close which influence has proved the stronger.

Notwithstanding the rapid advance that has been made during the past few years in the beautiful art of photography, and the various new applications of it in different arts and sciences, in one particular it has stood still. A negative picture upon glass can, as every one knows, be produced in a fraction of a second. But the after-process of producing so-called positive prints on paper from that negative is a tedious business, depending in great measure upon the brilliancy of the weather. Messrs Marion of London have endeavoured to obviate these inconveniences by the manufacture of a special kind of paper, the nature of which they at present keep secret, and which they now offer to the photographic world. By this paper a negative can be made to yield a positive image in a few seconds, quite independently of daylight, for a gas jet or paraffin lamp is sufficient to affect its extreme sensitiveness. This invention will enable a photographer to send his patron a dozen or more copies of a portrait that has been taken the same day.

The Bread Reform League is a useful society which has been formed to counteract the modern tendency to make what is properly called 'the staff of life' in such a way that many of its most useful ingredients are discarded. This society has, under the organisation of its energetic honorary secretary, Miss Yates, opened an Exhibition in London, where different samples of bread stuffs, treated in various ways, are shown. The profits of this Exhibition are to go to a 'Penny Dinner and Breakfast Fund' for the benefit of needy children attending the Board Schools. Hitherto, only food for the mind has been provided at these establishments, and the fact has recently leaked out that forty per cent. of the children arrive at some of them without any breakfast, and that at other schools twenty-eight per cent. often are dinnerless. It is a terribly sad story, and one very difficult to reconcile with the oft repeated boast that London is the richest city in the world.

The *Graphic* makes a very sensible suggestion with reference to those gloomy places called railway waiting-rooms. In similar places in France, the walls are often adorned with well-executed maps in relief, showing the country through which the line passes. Why should not this system be adopted in Britain? Constant travellers know to their cost that there are many railway stations in the kingdom where waiting-rooms are only too necessary. The cry of 'All change here!' often means that all will be compelled to wait here for an indefinite period. Now, if waiting-rooms were furnished with maps

and framed notices giving some account of the history of the surrounding neighbourhood, its antiquities, natural beauties, &c., the dreary time might in many cases be turned into a pleasant visit, and would most infallibly do good as an advertisement to the railway itself.

At a recent sale of art treasures at Cologne, there were put up to auction two curiosities which had been bought by their late possessor at some obscure town in Switzerland twenty-four years ago for the sum of twenty-three francs. One was a fifteenth-century cup of Venetian glass, and the other was a bundle of tapestry. At the last sale, these articles formed two distinct lots, and they realised more than thirty-six thousand francs—that is, fifteen hundred pounds sterling.

The question of 'musical pitch' has for many years troubled musicians, each country adopting a note giving a different number of vibrations per second as its standard. In Britain, we have the Philharmonic pitch, and when any one talks of having his piano tuned up to concert pitch, the Philharmonic standard is the one indicated. For some reason, the modern pitch is made higher than that recognised in past days, and consequently the compositions of some of the best composers are now heard in a key higher than that intended by their authors. We understand that a conference upon the subject is shortly to be organised. In the meantime, the Italian War Minister has sought the opinions of living composers with reference to the best pitch for military bands. We need only refer to the reply of one of these, Verdi, whose name is as familiar in Britain as in the country of his birth. He writes in reference to the modern high pitch: 'The lowering of the diapason will by no means impair the sonorousness and brilliancy of execution; it will, on the contrary, give something noble, full, majestic to the tone, which the strident effects of the higher pitch do not possess.' He goes on to say that one pitch should be common to all nations. 'The musical language is universal; why, therefore, should the note which is called A in Paris or Milan become B♭ in Rome?'

A German paper gives some interesting statistics relative to ear disease, which have been collected from different aural surgeons. From these, we gather that males are more subject to ear disease than females. Out of every three middle-aged persons, there is found one who does not hear so well with one ear as with the other. The liability to disease increases from birth to the age of forty, after which it decreases as old age is reached. Of six thousand children examined, twenty-three per cent. show symptoms of ear disease, and thirty-two per cent. a deficiency of hearing power. With regard to the results of surgical treatment, we learn that of the total number of cases of all kinds, fifty-three per cent. are cured, and thirty per cent. are benefited. We fancy that these figures are rather more favourable than surgeons in this country can show, it being well known that aural cases are among the most uncertain and unsatisfactory to deal with.

The steamship *Ionic*, which lately left this country for New Zealand, took out with her a large number of passengers of a description not usually met with on shipboard. They consisted of one hundred and fifty-eight stoats and weasels, whose mission in New Zealand will be to prey

upon the rabbits which are fast overrunning that country. This is the third consignment which has left our shores. The little animals are accommodated in zinc-lined boxes, and during the forty days' journey are calculated to require for their food more than two thousand live pigeons, which accompany them. The poor pigeons also require food, and therefore sixteen quarters of Indian corn were taken out for their consumption. Altogether, the expense to the colonial government must be something considerable, but will not be grudged if the required result is achieved.

STOCK EXCHANGE MORALITY.

PERHAPS there are few institutions possessing attributes more diametrically opposed to one another than the Stock Exchange. Undoubtedly useful in its way, it nevertheless abounds in gross abuse. It is a necessity to the *bond fide* investor, as indicating the locality where he can on the instant purchase or find a market for almost any stock in the world; yet it becomes a very hotbed of vice in the hands of the professional speculator. We apply this term to the man who fraudulently buys without the intention of paying, and worse still, sells what he does not possess. The method of so doing was fully explained in an article on 'Corners' in No. 19 of this *Journal*. Take a quite recent illustration of the two evils. Only a short time ago, a letter purporting to come from Mr Gladstone's private secretary, addressed to the Secretary of the Exchange, was received by him, and posted up in the House. It stated that certain unexpected interests would be paid to the Peruvian bondholders. The price went up over thirty per cent. in a few moments, so that any one having bought ten thousand pounds-worth the day before, could have then sold them for nearly fourteen thousand pounds. It is more than probable that the writer of the forged letter had previously purchased without any intention of paying or 'taking them off,' and on the imposition taking effect, at once sold out not only those he possessed, but also more that he did not possess. Within half an hour, the forgery was discovered, when the price immediately fell the thirty per cent. it had just risen. Thus this impudent adventurer would not only secure an enormous profit by the rise, but by buying back on the fall the extra quantity he had sold on the rise, reap an additional profit.

Now, it is this class of gambling, particularly the selling of what one does not possess, for the purpose of depressing the value of a certain stock to the prejudice of real holders, that constitutes the most unwholesome element of our Stock Exchange. Every conceivable artifice, the most consummate cunning, the most unblushing lies, are employed to depreciate a security which has either risen to a high figure on its merits, or else been puffed up artificially beforehand. Syndicates, as they are called—combinations of unprincipled men usually—are formed for the purpose, and there are indeed very few stocks existing at the present day that are not honoured by their especial syndicate. On any unfavourable rumour, more often concocted than otherwise, these eagle-eyed monsters swoop down upon their unsuspecting and inoffensive prey,

attacking with the ferociousness of a bear, until, in sheer desperation, one victim after another succumbs, and sells out to the 'bear' at an enormous sacrifice, in order to save the remnant of his dwindled inheritance. If, as they were uttered in it, the falsehoods of a single day could but glue themselves to and stick on the walls of that building, it would be a feat impossible of achievement for a fly to crawl unscathed between them! Monte Carlo is bad; but an institution where more fortunes are dishonestly lost and won in a day than at that notorious gambling-place in a week, must be at least no better, if not infinitely worse.

That there are men of integrity on 'Change, men of known principle, gentlemen in every sense of the word, admits of no doubt; and it is they who would first appreciate any effort, legislative or otherwise, for the suppression of the practices alluded to here. An act called 'Leeman's Act' was passed some years ago for the special protection of shareholders in banking establishments, which made it illegal to sell shares of any bank without first proving yourself to be a *bonâ fide* holder of its shares, giving their respective numbers, &c. The same protection should be afforded to every shareholder, no matter of what stock; and the time has now arrived for the legislature to take the matter seriously in hand. The blessings conferred thereby would be inestimable.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

MECHANICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF LIGHTNING STROKES.

At the first monthly meeting for the session of the Royal Meteorological Society, a paper was read by Colonel the Honourable Arthur Parnell on 'The Mechanical Characteristics of Lightning Strokes.' The main objects of this paper were—first, to attempt to show that lightning is not a sort of electric fluid that descends from the clouds, injures buildings and persons in its course, and dissipates itself in the earth; but that it is a luminous manifestation of the explosion, caused by two equal forces springing towards each other simultaneously from the earth and the under surface of the inducing cloud, and coalescing or flying out nearly midway between the two plates of the electrical condenser formed by the earth and the cloud; secondly, to demonstrate that of these two forces, it is the earth-spring or upward force alone that injures buildings, persons, or other objects on the earth's surface, and that constitutes tangibly what is rightly known as a lightning stroke. The author gave the details of two hundred and seventy-eight instances, the records of which were intended to demonstrate with more or less precision the existence of an upward direction in the force of the stroke. The theory of the descent of the electric fluid was suggested a few years ago by M. Colladon, a French Professor, and a notice of it will be found in *Chambers's Journal* for October 16, 1880.

PERSONS KILLED BY WILD ANIMALS IN INDIA.

A return published in the governmental *Gazette* shows that the number of persons killed by wild animals and snakes in 1883 was 22,905, as against 22,125 in the previous year. Of these, 20,067

deaths were due to snake-bites, 985 to tigers, and 504 to other carnivora. The loss of cattle from the same cause amounted to 47,478 animals, being an increase of 771 on the figures for the previous year. It is somewhat remarkable that while the great majority of human deaths is set down to snakes, only 1644 cattle are said to have perished from that cause. Nearly three-fourths of the deaths occurred in Bengal and the North-west Provinces. The number of dangerous animals killed during the year was 19,890, and more than fifteen thousand pounds was paid in rewards. In regard to the fearful mortality from snake-bites, it might be suggested that the government should increase the rewards paid for bringing in the dead bodies of these reptiles, or otherwise take more active measures for their destruction.

ENSILAGE.

Mr Edward S. Blunt, Blaby Hill, Leicester, writing to the newspapers on the subject of Ensilage, says that he has recently opened two of his silos, and both have proved very satisfactory. He adds:

'Two years since I tried pits sunk in the ground without any building; last year I tried bricks cemented on the inside; this year I have tried wood, and am so pleased with the result that I certainly shall stick to it for the future. Notwithstanding its perishable nature, I believe it will compare most favourably as regards expense with anything else. I have used one-inch red deal boards, grooved and tongued, and these I find quite sufficient to resist what little lateral pressure there is. I have built my silos, four in number, partly in the ground and partly out. This may be considered merely as a matter of convenience, as I find the ensilage just as good in one part as in the other. I construct them in such a manner that they are easily put up and taken down again; thus at a very trifling cost they can be removed from one place to another. My first silo, a round one, only six feet in diameter, was filled in May with rough grass cut from the hedge-sides and from under some trees; neither cattle nor horses would eat this before it went into the silo, but both will eat it readily enough now that it is made into ensilage. My second silo, only eight feet in diameter, was first filled with pea-straw after the main crop had been gathered for market, and then refilled with the second cutting of clover; this is all very good quite up to the boards at the sides.

'I am weighting my silos this year with a press I have invented and patented. I obtain my weight by means of levers: two levers, each twenty feet long, with four hundredweight at the end, will give eight tons weight upon the silo, and being thoroughly continuous in its action, I am able to dispense with the labour and cost of moving so large a quantity of dead-weight.' There is to be a model of the silo and press exhibited at the Smithfield Show, Islington.

Mr Blunt further explains his method of filling the silo. He says: 'In nearly every instance I placed the grass or clover in the silo the day after it was cut, and as it was put in, it was well trampled. In three or four days the silage sank from twelve feet to eight, and as it sank I put

in more. In about ten days from the time when the silo was first filled I put on the weight. The silage at this time had attained a temperature of from one hundred and forty to one hundred and fifty degrees. After the weight was applied, the temperature never rose any higher; but, at the end of a fortnight, had fallen to one hundred and thirty degrees, and then continued to fall. When the silage had sunk sufficiently low in the silo, I took off the weights and boards and filled up to the top again; this I repeated three or four times.'

A HANDY GAS COOKING-STOVE.

To his already extensive list of gas cooking apparatus, Mr Fletcher, Warrington, has just added what he calls his 'Large Cottage Cooker,' which is simply a Gas cooking-stove in the cheapest and simplest form to be effective. For two pounds may be had a good roasting, and a fairly good pastry and bread oven, with a reversible boiler and grillers on the top. The body of the stove is made of galvanised iron, and the shelves are wrought iron. The height of the whole is thirty inches; space inside the oven twelve by twelve by sixteen inches.

When we consider their convenience to house-keepers and the time which they save, we do not wonder that the use of such stoves is rapidly extending. The equable nature of the heat insures good cookery; a pot or kettle may be boiled on the burner in a few minutes, and the housewife may be kept quite easy as to the state of her kitchen fire for cooking purposes. In fact, in summer the kitchen fire may be dispensed with altogether. There is no smoke or ashes; pans and kettles are easier kept clean, and all this is done at but a trifling expense for gas—say one penny per hour for a medium stove. A potato steamer will be found a useful adjunct to the stove. By its aid, the potatoes, after being boiled, are finished off with steam in the upper part of the same vessel; and will be found drier and mealier than if cooked in an ordinary pot in the old way.

RAILWAY PASSENGERS.

A curious return has just been issued, showing the number of railway passengers who have travelled on all the railways in the United Kingdom during the half-year ending 30th June last, by which it will be seen that railway shareholders continue to be mainly indebted for their dividends to third-class traffic. During the above period the number of passengers who travelled were as follows, omitting fractions: First class, sixteen million one hundred thousand; second class, twenty-five million eight hundred thousand; third class, two hundred and forty-one million seven hundred thousand—the number of third-class passengers being more than five hundred per cent. in excess of first and second class combined; and the relative amount of receipts is in equal proportion. This remarkable difference applies to all the lines in common, the third-class passengers being in excess all throughout the kingdom. But the North London line is especially striking in regard to receipts, inasmuch as the receipts from the third-class passengers amounted to about eight hundred per cent. more than from the first and second

combined! Within the same period, the Metropolitan and District Railways, and the North London Railway, carried over fifty million passengers; to which enormous return must be added, as showing the prodigious traffic within the area of the metropolis, that of the Great Eastern; London, Chatham, and Dover; London and Brighton; South-western; and South-eastern—a large portion of whose traffic is purely metropolitan.

THE NEW ALBO-CARBON LIGHT.

An experiment has been tried on a grand scale with this new and beautiful light, which as an illuminating medium will most certainly take a front place, whether the question is gas or electricity. The immense church belonging to the Oratory of St Philip Neri at Brompton has lately been illuminated by the employment of eight twelve-light, two six-light, and two four-light clusters constructed on this principle; and these have been found so effective, that the interior of this vast and very lofty building is filled with a brilliant, yet soft and subdued, light, which covers the area of the great church. The authorities of the Oratory have expressed their satisfaction at the favourable results of the experiment; and the capability of the Albo-carbon Light has been demonstrated as to bringing out clearly the architectural features of our churches, which, as a general rule, are not celebrated for the excellence of their various systems of gas-lighting. Therefore, any clear and brilliant light which will do this, and at the same time not add too much to the heat of the interior, should be hailed as an inestimable boon, and be one of the chief recommendations of this new and beautiful system.

THE LAST OF OLD SION COLLEGE.

One by one the old City landmarks are disappearing before the ruthless hand of the modern speculative builder. Many of the City churches have already been taken down and their sites covered with shops or warehouses; Charter House and St Paul's School are both going; and Sion College is gone—to be opened in a new building on the Thames Embankment, into which the ancient stone front is to be transferred from London Wall. The College, of which all the City vicars and rectors are Fellows, was originally incorporated in 1630, but burnt down in the great fire of London, to be rebuilt shortly afterwards. The site is let for building, but the ancient wooden fittings of the Hall and Library have been sold. The fine library of books will be removed to the new building when complete.

IRISH FEMALE EMIGRATION.

Mr Vere Foster, of Belfast, has issued another appeal on behalf of his Irish Female Emigration Fund, which has already been the means of granting assisted passages to twenty thousand two hundred and fifty girls from the west of Ireland to the United States and colonies, at an expenditure of about thirty thousand pounds. This scheme has the support—as it should have—of the clergy of all denominations, and there is little doubt that if carefully gone about, it will prove

a benefit both to Ireland and the colonies. Mr Foster, who has exhausted what he can spare of his own means and the funds placed at his disposal, has also given assistance by loan to four hundred girls, who have promised to repay him. We trust they may do so, as the good fortune of four hundred more hangs on this contingency.

The purpose of the fund is the relief of present poverty in the densely peopled districts of the west of Ireland, by assisting the emigration of young women of good character of the farm and domestic-servant class. To such it gives a chance of well-doing impossible at home, where, if they marry and rear families, there is but a prospect of poverty for themselves and all concerned. The scheme is a resumption of that adopted with gratifying results immediately after the great famine of 1846-7.

The plan which Mr Foster has had in operation for helping these young women for the past five years is a very simple one. Blank forms of application are issued to inquirers, when, if returned and approved of, vouchers to a certain value are issued in their favour. These vouchers are available within three months of issue for embarkation from Liverpool or from any port in Ireland where the necessary arrangements have been made. The promoter of this scheme does not approve of shipping young girls in large companies, but leaves them the utmost freedom in their choice of ship and port and time of embarkation. This enables them to take a passage when perhaps they can have the company of friends and neighbours. The young women thus assisted were between eighteen and thirty years of age; and it is satisfactory to know that most of them are going on well, and that many of them have sent home money to their friends more than once.

One of the most satisfactory forms of good doing is to help people to help themselves. This is the object of the Irish Female Emigration Fund.

EXPLORATION IN THE CHILIAN ARGENTINE ANDES.

It would appear, from the proceedings of the Berlin Academy of Sciences, that Dr Güssfeldt's explorations in the central Chilian Argentine Andes extended from November 1882 to March 1883, in the wild and lofty mountain region containing Aconcagua, the most elevated known point of the American continent, which lies between thirty-two and thirty-five degrees south latitude, and is bounded on the east by the Argentine Pampas, and on the west by the Pacific. Much of this journey being through new country, Dr Güssfeldt daily observed the great orographical and landscape features, the glacial conditions above the snow, the character of the vegetation, and the phenomena of rock-weathering. He also undertook the special duty of fixing positions astronomically and taking altitudes; for which purpose he was provided with nineteen instruments. The central Chilian Argentine Andes are sketched by the traveller as two parallel chains, having on the Pacific an outlying coast-range. The western chain is the true water-parting of the Atlantic and Pacific; and the eastern is in many places broken through by the waters rising in the great trough between

the two chains, which has no well-defined valley formation, indications of a longitudinal depression being only found at intervals, constantly interrupted by cross ridges. This trough or basin, one hundred and eighty-five miles in length, is very difficult of exploration, and only three months of the year are available for the purpose. The doctor crossed the divide at four points, and obtained altitudes from nine thousand four hundred and ninety-four feet to twenty-two thousand eight hundred and sixty-seven feet, which was reached near the great volcano Aconcagua, not far from the commencement of Valle Hermoso. A most interesting question of the effect of rarefied air at great elevations upon the human frame is dwelt upon by the doctor. He states that he and his assistant attained twenty-one thousand and thirty feet on Aconcagua, and were able to work their scientific instruments at that height, though not in good condition, through anxiety and want of sleep. Their lungs were physically exhausted by the effort of speaking; but there was no flow of blood from nose or ears. He says that the so-called *puna* can be resisted by mental effort and confidence, the only effect upon a properly trained individual being increased lung-action, and that any one who could work as he did at twenty-one thousand and thirty feet, could reach the top of Aconcagua, where the proportion of oxygen is only 6.2-3 per cent. less than at the former elevation.

NATIVE TREATMENT OF DISEASES IN INDIA.

A correspondent thus writes: Regarding the native treatment of diseases, one of the most curious things I ever witnessed was a half-clad native shouting through the streets of a country town: 'Does any one want back his sight?—one rupee only!' as if he were hawking fruits or sweetmeats; and, to my astonishment, a patient soon presented himself to be operated on for cataract. There and then standing in the bazaar, the itinerant oculist took out his penknife and performed the operation in a few minutes, bound up the man's eyes, and telling him to keep in the dark for a fortnight, received his fee of one rupee, and shouted his war-cry for more patients. The operation was almost unvaryingly successful; one instance among my servants being a woman of eighty, who had charge of my fowl-house, and had for many a day been sightless, except to distinguish light from darkness, and who in this way was successfully operated upon. Besides this operator are bone-setters, and medical rubbers male and female, especially represented by the hereditary low-caste *accoucheuse* of each village, whose skill in shampooing is such an aid in her lowly calling—as the natives regard it—as to supplant much of the useless medicine and enforced rest of more civilised countries, and save endless mischief and suffering to her sex. What skill they have is of course almost purely traditional. None of the science of the world or British usage has yet altered in the slightest degree either the customs of the native or his horror at the idea of male physicians for women—especially in certain ailments—and their wonder at our obtuseness and disregard of propriety on so delicate a point. To supply a vacancy so long unfilled, lady-doctors have now appeared

on the scene, who, it is hoped by reaching the zefanas, may reach the real source through which a higher enlightenment in India is possible. An immense field is open to them along with every encouragement; and were but some of the many young ladies at home who are straining health for a future pittance in one or other of the spheres of teaching, to turn their attention in this direction, they would find an opening of wider and greater utility before them, and a prospect of large and rapid emolument.

LONG AGO.

We wandered in a garden fair,
When summer sun was shining,
And laden was the balmy air
With scent of roses rich and rare
Around us intertwining.
There trilled the thrush his glorious song;
There thrilled the echoes all night long
The warbling nightingale.
You taught me all each songster said,
And in each floweret's heart you read
Some hidden tale;
You said their message I should know:
'Twas simple as an easy rhyme—
But that was once upon a time
Long ago!

We parted in a woodland glade
When autumn winds were sighing,
In gold and russet bright arrayed
A glowing canopy displayed
The summer leaves a-dying;
And but the wind, no other sound
Than a leaf that fluttered to the ground,
And a far-off robin singing,
We heard. You guessed my thoughts, and said:
'In spring, the swallows who have fled
Will back be winging;
The trees a brighter emerald show,
The rose a richer crimson glow,
Than any gleamed in this year's prime'—
All this was once upon a time
Long ago!

'What though a while we part,' you cried;
'What though the wind is sighing;
The spring will autumn's frost deride,
The summer laugh at winter-tide,
Long power to grief denying.
We part, but never say farewell;
Nor let the dead leaves to us tell
A tale of changeless sorrow;
Fair Spring comes sparkling down the dell,
And in that morrow,
'If still upon this world below,
We'll meet 'neath yonder spreading lime'—
You said so once upon a time
Long ago!

Perchance you have forgot all this;
'Twas long ago;
Perchance you sneer at words like bliss
And lovers' woe.
Or else you are amused—as I—
To think we once swore we should die,
If fate us parted;
To think we vowed so soon to meet,
And said in spring-time we would greet,
Or else be broken-hearted.
Strange—is it not?—to have fancied so.
You smile, no doubt, such things to know;
Or do you count it as a crime
To think of once upon a time
Long ago!

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